

## *Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles*

"Lt. Lloyd D. Schaeffer Letters"

Carroll County Times article for 03 October 1993

By Jay A. Graybeal

When the organizers of the July 4, 1919, parade to honor the veterans of the World War needed a parade marshal, they chose Lt. Lloyd Diehl Schaeffer of Westminster. Lt. Schaeffer was a decorated aviation observer who had served with the French. Two of his letters published in local newspapers give some idea of the life of an aviator on the Western Front in 1918.

In a July letter to his mother, Mrs. Mary Myers, he described a bombing raid during the Aisne-Marne Campaign:

"Just to tell you that while the big drive is on and we are fighting like h---, I am still all right. We go over the lines every day, once in the morning and again in the afternoon. Recently we patrolled "No Man's Land" at a very low altitude and had an exciting battle with seven Fokker triplanes. I was fortunate again to get off without a scratch. It was an exciting trip. I never expected to see so much of the battle in an actual advance. There were about 100 machines in the bunch, and it seems we must have wiped out a division, as our bombs looked like rain falling, and it would seem impossible to escape them, as we covered miles.

"We had orders to bomb at a very low altitude this morning and carried a full load of bombs. Just before we reached the lines (we were then about 5,000 feet high) we ran into clouds, and while coming down we struck a Hun patrol and the best fight I have seen yet took place. We beat them off and kept on down, when we ran into anti-aircraft guns, which started to shoot, and shrapnel kept bursting all around us until we reached our object. We then returned to our base safely after we dropped tons of bombs on troops massed below, and arrived home with 30 holes in my plane."

He soon wrote of a less successful combat of August 29 that nearly took his life:

"At last I can write you a few lines, and will try to tell you something about my case. As you know Fritz shot me down and made a pretty good job of it. In fact, he put five bullets through me, one through my ankle, one above my knee, one through my arm, and last but not least two through my back, which struck my shoulder blade and broke it, then tore up something inside of me, as it was an explosive. The doctors at once sewed me up, and I can tell you that no one thought I would live, but they sent me into Paris to an American Officers Hospital and after a few days they discovered the wounds in my back were starting to poison me, so they had to rip my back open, and every morning dress it and I suffer tortures of the damned. I have never suffered so much in all my life. I shot my man and forced another out of the fight, and I was fighting the famous "Traveling Circus" at that time, which is some feat. Will receive from the French a Palm or two, also the French Blesse Medal and am sure proud of it. The boys brought me the gold- our Escadre insignia with which I am tickled to death. I suppose I will be laid up for a few months yet, it has been sixteen days now since I was shot and believe me I can pull through. All my leg wounds are healed up, and my arm is doing well, but my back is still nasty. They are trying to save my arm, as it seems there is something broken that works my shoulder. The boys think I will be sent to the States to lecture, I don't know. In a few days they are going to sew my back up, and the Lord knows that I can't stand any more, as I am losing my nerve. I had the unique experience of seeing Paris in an

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ambulance as they rode me all through Paris coming into the hospital and it was so funny. Yesterday some of the officers and myself went for a short walk as I wanted to get my strength back in my leg and we walked the streets of Paris in pajamas. Gee, but we had lots of fun, and I am going to try to go to a theatre. I can move around fine as my legs are O. .K. They seem to want me to move around and I feel so much better when I do. The hospital is in the Latin quarter of Paris, and we see some queer sights and enjoy the fine walks. The doctors say my physical condition was perfect and it is due to that I will pull through, so mother I have you to thank that you let me run as a kid and did not make a Sis of me. Well, good night dear folks, and don't worry as I will be fine soon."

Lt. Schaeffer survived his wounds and received the French Croix de Guerre Medal with a palm, indicating the highest grade of the award. He returned to the United States on December 28, 1918 and was honorably discharged on April 9, 1919.

Photo caption: Lt. Lloyd D. Schaeffer in the uniform of an American Air Service officer probably taken at the time of the July 4, 1919, parade to honor the veterans of the World War. This photograph will be one of many artifacts related to local veterans in the upcoming exhibit at the Historical Society. The exhibit will open on November 11, 1993 in the Historical Society's Shriver-Weybright Auditorium at 210 E. Main St., Westminster. Gift of Betty Smith Yingling, 1992.